

Message Text

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XMT AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

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EXDIS

FOL RPT NAIROBI 7756 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO KHARTOUM
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QTE: S E C R E T NAIROBI 7756

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PEPR, EGEN, SU, US
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER RASHID AL-TAHIR

FOLLOWING IS CLEARED TEXT OF KHARTOUM'S 2298 TO NAIROBI:
SUMMARY: IN MEETING MAY 20, FOREIGN MINISTER RASHID AL-TAHIR
BRIEFLY MENTIONED NEED FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE BUT DEVOTED
HIS REMARKS PRINCIPALLY TO REGIONAL POLITICAL SITUATION.
SUDANESE FONMIN STRESSED DANGER OF SOVIET INTERVENTION IN
AFRICA AND ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER SOVIET DESIGNS IN
MIDDLE EAST. HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR U.S. CONCERN
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AND INTEREST IN AFRICA AND MIDDLE EAST BUT ARGUED THAT USG
NEEDED DO MORE. HE WAS CRITICAL OF LACK USG MILITARY
ASSISTANCE TO SOMALIA. DAS HARROP BRIEFED FONMIN IN
CONFIDENCE ON VANCE-GROMYKO TALKS IN MOSCOW REGARDING
SOVIET INTERVENTION IN AFRICA, NOTING SECRETARY'S QUOTE
STERN UNQUOTE TONE. HARROP ALSO SAID THAT A THOROUGH U.S.
REVIEW OF POSSIBLE ACCELERATION OF FS DELIVERIES TO SUDAN

HAD REVEALED SUCH SERIOUS PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES THAT PURSUING THE IDEA DID NOT SEEM TO BE IN EITHER SUDANESE OR US INTEREST. HARROP NOTED U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO KENYA AND SUGGESTED SUDANGOV CONVEY OUR VIEWS ON PROBLEMS CAUSED BY SOMALIA SUPPORT FOR WSLF TO SAID BARRE. HARROP ALSO BRIEFED FONMIN ON LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN ZAIRE. END SUMMARY.

1. DAS HARROP AND HORMATS CALLED ON FONMIN RASHID AL-TAHIR BAKR MAY 20. THEY WERE ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR AND DCM. BECAUSE OF APPOINTMENT IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING WITH PRESIDENT NIMEIRI(SEPTELS) CONVERSATION WITH FONMIN HAD TO BE LIMITED TO HALF HOUR. HARROP INDICATED WE INTERESTED IN RASHID AL-TAHIR'S VIEWS ON SUDANESE ECONOMIC ISSUES WHICH HE AND HORMATS WOULD BE DISCUSSING IN MORE DETAIL WITH OTHER SUDANGOV LEADERS. VISITORS FROM WASHINGTON ALSO INTERESTED IN SUDANESE VIEWS ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

2. FON MIN BEGAN BY ACKNOWLEDGING SUDAN'S QUOTE VERY DIFFICULT UNQUOTE ECONOMIC SITUATION. NOTING THAT HE DISCUSSED US-SUDAN ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH SECRETARY DURING LATTER'S BRIEF STOP HERE APRIL 13, FONMIN CONTRACTED RAPID IMPROVEMENT IN BILATERAL POLITICAL COOPERATION WITH MUCH SLOWER MOVEMENT IN ECONOMIC COOPERATION. HE ALSO SAID THAT US PRIVATE SECTOR WAS AHEAD OF USG IN THIS AREA. QUOTE WE EXPECT USG TO PLAY A ROLE UNQUOTE, HE SAID.

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3. FONMIN DID NOT RPT NOT DWELL ON ECONOMIC QUESTIONS. RATHER, HE DEVOTED MOST OF HIS REMARKS TO REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS. HE ARGUED THAT SOVIETS IN AFRICA WERE UNCHECKED AND THUS WERE ABLE TO MAKE GAINS IN ETHIOPIA, ZAIRE AND CHAD. USSR BEHIND POLITICAL STRIFE IN ALL THREE COUNTRIES, HE SAID, AND ADDED THAT SUDANGOV AGAINST SOVIET INTERVENTION. SUDANGOV ACTIVELY WARNING AFRICANS AND ARABS AGAINST SOVIET ROLE IN AFRICA BUT SUDANGOV CANNOT FACE USSR ALONE. THEREFORE IT LOOKS TO FRIENDS FOR ACTIVE SUPPORT. USG NOT RPT NOT EXPECTED SEND TROOPS TO AFRICA BUT THROUGH ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE IT CAN HELP SUDAN DEFEND ITS BORDERS. RASHID AL-TAHIR PRAISED PRESENT ADMINISTRATION FOR TAKING REAL INTEREST IN PROBLEMS OF AFRICA AND ARAB WORLD BUT MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE, HE SAID.

4. REGARDING SOMALIA, RASHI AL-TAHIR COMPLAINED THAT THERE NO RPT NO US QUID PRO QUO FOLLOWING WITHDRAWAL OF SOMALI TROOPS FROM OGADEN. USG WAS SUPPOSED TO GET SOVIETS AND CUBANS OUT OF ETHIOPIA. INSTEAD, THERE ARE NOW MORE OF THEM THERE. SUDANESE AND OTHER AFRICANS WONDER WHERE SOVIETS/ CUBANS WILL EMERGE NEXT. THIS IS FEAR THAT NOW RPT NOW

EXISTS, HE SAID. SAME APPLIES TO MIDDLE EAST. IF THINGS ARE LEFT AS THEY ARE, SITUATION WILL SOON BE RIPE FOR SOVIETS. HE ASKED IF US HAS SPOKEN CLEARLY TO SOVIETS.

5. HARROP BRIEFED FONMIN IN CONFIDENCE ON SECRETARY VANCE'S RECENT MEETING WITH GROMYKO IN MOSCOW IN WHICH SECRETARY WAS FRANK AND STERN REGARDING SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA. SECRETARY TOLD SOVIET FONMIN THAT CONTINUATION OF SOVIET MILITARY BEHAVIOR IN AFRICA WOULD HAVE SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR BILATERAL US-SOVIET RELATIONS. HARROP INDICATED THAT THIS HAD BEEN A CONFIDENTIAL DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGE DONE QUIETLY WITH NO PUBLICITY, BUT USG WANTED SUDANGOV TO BE AWARE OF MOSCOW DISCUSSIONS.

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6. HARROP THEN DISCUSSED F-5 SALE AND SAID US HAD CAREFULLY STUDIED POSSIBLE WAYS TO EXPEDITE DELIVERY AHEAD OF PRESENT SCHEDULE. THERE WERE DIFFICULT PRACTICAL PROBLEMS RELATED TO AVAILABILITY OF APPROPRIATE EQUIPMENT, TO PROBABLE ADDITIONAL COST FACTOR, AND PARTICULARLY TO IMPORTANCE OF PROPER PREPARATION OF MAINTENANCE FACILITIES AND TRAINING OF SUDANESE PERSONNEL BEFORE DELIVERY. US WAS REACHING RELUCTANT CONCLUSION THAT ACCELERATION OF DELIVERIES WOULD NOT BE PRACTICAL AND WOULD NOT IN FACT SERVE OUR CENTRAL MUTUAL OBJECTIVE OF STRENGTHENING SUDANESE DEFENSE CAPABILITY. HARROP SAID FINAL DECISION HAD NOT BEEN MADE BUT THAT ADVANCE DELIVERY SEEMED UNWISE.

7. HARROP SAID US WISHED SUPPORT SOMALIA IN FACE OF SOVIET AND CUBAN THREAT AND WOULD SHORTLY PROPOSE A DEFENSE SURVEY TEAM TO SIAD BARRE TO PURSUE OUR PROPOSED MILITARY ASSISTANCE. HOWEVER, KENYA WAS A GOOD FRIEND OF US AND WAS CONCERNED ABOUT PERCEIVED THREAT FROM SOMALIA, SO US HAD WISHED FIRST TO CLARIFY THAT SOMALIA WOULD NOT USE FORCE AGAINST THEIR NEIGHBORS. REPORTS ON CONTINUING SOMALI MILITARY SUPPORT TO WSLF IN OGADEN WERE TROUBLESOME. IF SOMALIS REMAIN ACTIVE IN OGADEN, CUBANS AND SOVIETS WILL HAVE EXCUSE FOR REMAINING IN ETHIOPIA AS WELL. US COULD NOT BE ASSOCIATED WITH FURTHER CROSS BORDER ADVENTURES. SUDANGOV MAY WISH CONVEY USG CONCERNS TO SAID BARRE.

8. MEETING CLOSED WITH HARROP REVIEWING CURRENT SHBABA DEVELOPMENTS AND DESCRIBING USG ACTIONS AND DECISION WHICH WERE BEING TAKEN IN RESPONSE TO SITUATION.

9. COMMENT: TIME DID NOT RPT NOT ALLOW FULL DISCUSSION OF ALL ISSUES OR FOR MUCH MORE THAN FONMIN AND HARROP TO EXPRESS POINTS NOTED ABOVE. MEETING WAS RELAXED AND
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FRIENDLY. SUDANESE PARTICULARLY WELDOMCED REPORT ON VANCE-
GROMYKO MEETING IN WASHINGTON. FONMIN'S URGING FOR
ADDITIONAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND STRONGER USG ROLE TO
COUNTER SOVIET GAINS IN AFRICA REPEATED FAMILIAR, ALBEIT
DEEPLY FELT, THEMS. SUGGEST TEXT THIS REPORT BE REPEATED TO
HORN OF AFRICA COLLECTIVE. LEMELLE UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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